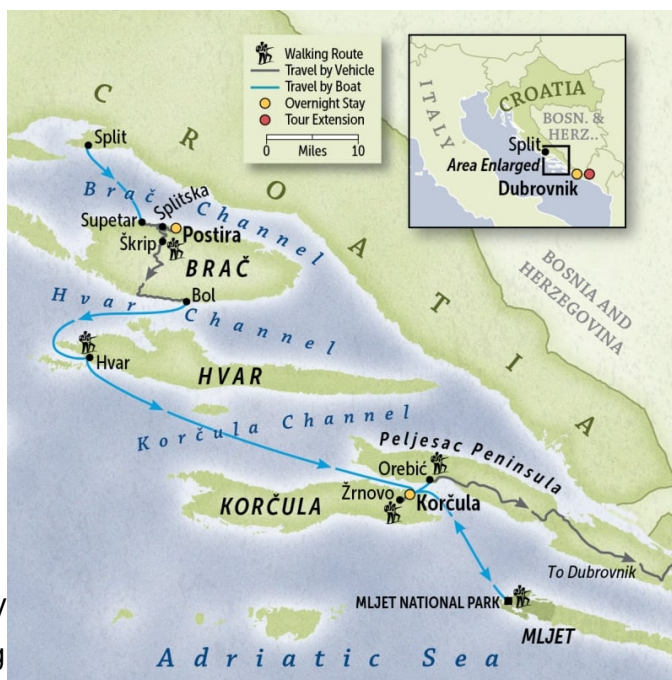


Croatia: Brač, Korčula & Mljet National Park

Air Package Itinerary

While some island-hopping vacations merely scratch Croatia's surface, this walking adventure brings you deep into its authentic culture. Our local Croatian leaders are the key ingredient—with deep roots in the Dalmatian Islands, they'll introduce you to many local friends along the way. Enjoy a spectacular tapas lunch of Dalmatian specialties at a local olive oil museum, where you'll sample the "liquid gold" and learn about its production. Stroll through mossy woodlands on the island of Korčula, followed by an entertaining evening of local music and revelry. Enjoy stunning views of the Pelješac channel while relaxing on the terrace of a local Lumbarda vintner—sampling sensational Grk wine. Take a catamaran ferry ride to Mljet National Park and discover rich bird and plant life along the tranquil shores of the Adriatic. With a final night in historic Dubrovnik, you can truly say you've experienced the authentic Dalmatian Coast.



Highlights

- Spend a leisurely three nights on the spectacular island of Korčula, with time to enjoy a festive dinner at our friends' *konoba* in the breathtaking hills above town.
- Trek across lush terrain (perhaps taking a dip in crystalline waters) as you explore the National Park on the island of Mljet.
- Discover the birthplace of the legendary Marco Polo as you walk the charming, medieval streets of Korčula's Old Town, lead by a local expert.
- Tuck into a tapas-style lunch of olive tapenades and the local "liquid gold" after touring the Olive

Oil Museum in Škrip—Brač's oldest settlement.

- Sample Croatia's indigenous *Grk* grape variety at our friends' organic winery on Korčula.

On all Fully-Guided Adventures you can count on ...



Expert local guides to introduce you to the best of your destination.



Gracious accommodations that are a clean, comfortable home away from home.



Off-the-beaten-path places you'd never find on your own.



Experts to handle all the details.



A maximum of 18 fun-loving fellow travelers to share the journey.



Air Packages include plane tickets, airport car service, and pre- and post-tour accommodations.



Delicious, authentic multi-course meals—virtually all are included.

Activity Level

This tour is one of our Guided Walking Adventures. It is rated easy to moderate, with most walks on the moderate side, an average of 4 to 6 miles per day, with options on some days. There are daily ascents and descents, with climbing time on the ascents ranging from about 15 to 45 minutes (and average elevation gain and loss of approximately 500 feet). The terrain varies from paved and cobblestone streets (during organized city tours and other easy village exploration) to uneven, single-track trails with loose stones or

gravel, rocky coastal paths, ancient ruins, and sets of ancient stone steps. The trails are often exposed to the sun. Days are quite full on this tour due to the inclusion of travel by ferry and catamaran in order to island hop.

Flight Day

Depart for Your Vacation

Your vacation is about to begin! Spend your first night aloft and arrive ready for an unforgettable trip.

Arrival Day

Arrive in Split. Pre-Tour Hotel Night: Split

Start off your first day in Split right by having a Country Walkers representative greet you at the airport. A complimentary car service will whisk you to your centrally located hotel. From here, you are perfectly positioned to explore this charming city at your leisure.

DAY 1

Your Country Walkers Vacation Begins: Walk to Split Port for Ferry to Brač. Dračevica to Donji Humac. Travel to Postira

3 miles, easy

Enjoy an included breakfast at your hotel, then meet your leaders in the lobby of the Hotel Park in Split at 9:00 a.m. They'll be wearing Country Walkers shirts. Please be dressed for hiking.

After a brief orientation meeting, join your leaders for a short walk along the seaside promenade to the nearby ferry terminal. Upon reaching the port, you'll board the public ferry (a 50-minute ride) to Brač—the longest island in the Croatian archipelago and also the one with the highest elevation. You disembark in Supetar, a vibrant town on the island's north side, dominated by the 115-foot bell tower of the Parish Church of the Annunciation.

Brač, the third-largest island in the archipelago, is best known for its luminous white stone, famously used in the construction of Diocletian's Palace in Split—and even elements of the White House in Washington,

DC. It's also renowned for its olives, particularly the signature island variety, Oblitsa (also known as Bračka).

A short minibus ride brings you to the start of an easygoing walk from the tiny village of Dračevica, passing vineyards, almond trees, olive groves, and stone quarries. Your route culminates in the nearby village of Donji Humac, home to a unique gallery that blends sculpture, painting, and fashion design. After a brief tour—and perhaps a demonstration of traditional artistic techniques—refuel over lunch at a favorite local restaurant, enjoying a spread of regional specialties.

Later, a 15-minute minibus ride brings you to your hotel, a comfortable property with a pool overlooking the peaceful coastal village of Postira. After settling in, explore this former merchant town of stone buildings and historic palaces with your leaders. Then gather for a welcome drink and dinner, where you'll savor another delicious meal featuring the bounty of this distinctive coast.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 2

Postira to Splitska and Škrip. Lovrečina Cove to Postira

5 miles, easy to moderate, 800-ft. elevation gain; 3 miles, easy

Savor breakfast and coffee—perhaps on the outdoor terrace—while admiring the calm waters of the sheltered cove. Today's walk takes you along a pine-clad northern coastal path from Postira to the fishing village of Splitska. A steady ascent winds through olive groves and cultivated terraces, culminating in the village of Škrip—the island's oldest settlement, founded by the Illyrians in 1000 BCE. Remnants of the original city wall can still be seen surrounding the ancient citadel.

Pause to visit a local olive oil museum for a glimpse into the history of oil production and to sample the region's "liquid gold." Sit down to enjoy a lunch of homemade local specialties such as tapenade, cheeses, Dalmatian prosciutto, sardines, olives, salad, fresh bread, and a variety of jams made from the area's fig and cherry trees.

The afternoon presents two options. Join your leaders along the *lungomare*, or seaside trail, from Lovrečina Cove back to Postira, passing the ruins of a Roman basilica en route to your hotel. Alternatively,

you may choose to return to the hotel via minibus. Either option allows time to relax poolside this afternoon.

Later, enjoy dinner on your own—either at the hotel or at one of the many waterfront eateries.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 3

Island Hopping: Hvar Island and Korčula Island

1-2 miles, easy to moderate

After a breakfast of fresh fruit, bread, cheese, and yogurt, you set off for a day of island hopping. Board a catamaran ferry for a short trip to the chic island of Hvar, once famed for its lavender production. A walled medieval port with stunning beaches, Hvar Town is a delight to explore. The surrounding waters are dotted with picturesque islands, while the city's Old Town features elegant Renaissance architecture.

Enjoy a guided tour of the town with an expert local guide. Visit the Cathedral of St. Stephen, with its distinctive rectangular bell tower, and the town's impressive 17th-century theater—the first in Europe to be open to the public. Afterward, consider visiting the Benedictine convent, where, over the centuries, the nuns perfected the art of lacemaking. A small on-site museum showcases their delicate handiwork.

Join your guide on the short (but steep) climb to the Španjola Fortress, a medieval castle built on the site of an ancient Illyrian settlement dating back to 500 BCE. The trail to the citadel rewards you with a spectacular bird's-eye view of the harbor and the nearby Pakleni Islands.

Savor lunch on your own at a *konoba* (tavern) of your choice. The rest of the afternoon is yours to stroll the promenade, take a dip in the sea, browse local shops and galleries, or relax at a waterfront café.

In the late afternoon, relax aboard a scenic public catamaran ferry to Korčula Island, the sixth-largest island in the Adriatic. Settle in at your seaside hotel—your base for the next three nights—before stepping out with your leaders for a memorable dinner. Savor starters like tuna pâté, followed by fresh grilled fish paired with a glass of crisp local white wine.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 4

Brdo, Žrnovo, and Kocje Protected Area

4 miles, easy to moderate

After breakfast in your hotel's panoramic dining room, you set out to explore the wooded hills above the Old Town of Korčula—an island blanketed in vineyards, olive groves, and Mediterranean *maquis* (a low-lying, fragrant shrub), and dotted with picturesque villages. Cherished cultural traditions have been lovingly preserved here, from religious festivals and folk music to dancing and shipbuilding.

A short drive brings you to Brdo, where you follow an enchanting trail circuit in the Kocje Protected Area—characterized by vineyards, rock walls, distant church towers, and large boulders draped in emerald green moss and ivy. The trail continues across rocky terrain before arriving, via the old Napoleon Road, in Žrnovo. Here, there's time to explore the village and visit St. Martin's Church.

Continue to a nearby home and winery, where you'll be rewarded with a tasting of the island's famous *Grk* and *Plavac Mali* wines, along with a light, tapas-style lunch served on a terrace boasting sweeping views of the sea and surrounding islands.

The late afternoon is yours to enjoy. Known for its vineyards and olive groves, Korčula is also home to ancient Croatian traditions and an atmospheric medieval Old Town, preserved as a UNESCO World Heritage site. One of the most picturesque islands in the Adriatic, it remains surprisingly uncrowded—offering delightful opportunities for exploration. Take to the water and admire views of Korčula from the sea; you may wish to rent a kayak or stand-up paddleboard for a self-guided tour of the nearby coves. Or simply enjoy a refreshing dip in the hotel's outdoor pool.

You might also browse the fascinating collections in Korčula's small museums, such as the Town Museum and the Icon Museum, or wander the narrow alleys lined with boutiques and art galleries.

Later, reconvene as a group for a guided walk through the Old Town with a passionate local expert. Often called a "miniature Dubrovnik" for its beautiful medieval buildings and intricate stonework, Korčula offers a magical setting for your evening stroll. Afterward, enjoy independent dining (with recommendations from your leaders), followed by a post-dinner wander along the enchanting streets of Korčula Town—the

perfect close to a rewarding day.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 5

Mljet National Park

3-7 miles, easy to moderate

After breakfast, embark on a catamaran-style ferry for a 45-minute ride to the lush, forest-covered island of Mljet, home to a national park of the same name. In 1960, this alluring island became Croatia's first protected marine area—a paradise of unspoiled tranquility that, legend has it, held Odysseus in its embrace for seven years.

Your leaders will offer different trail options today, allowing you to customize your time in this stunning natural setting. You might trace the shores of Veliko Jezero and Malo Jezero (literally “Great” and “Small” Lake), perhaps climbing 500 feet to Veliki Gradac for a bird’s-eye view over the Soline Channel.

Take time to enjoy a swim and refuel over lunch at a lakeside *konoba*. Then, hop a boat to St. Mary’s Island in the center of Veliko Jezero, where you can explore the 900-year-old Benedictine monastery of Sveta Marija (St. Mary).

Return to Korčula in the late afternoon. Dinner this evening is a special affair at a friend’s restaurant in the hills above town. A traditional feast awaits, featuring a seasonal menu that may include local cheese, olives, cured meats, homemade pasta, garden-fresh greens, and grilled fish—paired with a glass (or two!) of local wine or beer.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 6

Peljesac Peninsula: Viganj to Orebic. Travel to Dubrovnik

5 miles, easy to moderate, 800-ft. elevation gain and loss

After an included breakfast, you bid farewell to Korčula and set out to walk the hills along the Pelješac Peninsula. This area is home to some of the best beaches in southern Dalmatia, with wide, sandy coves bordered by groves of tamarisk and pine.

After a short private boat ride to the tiny town of Viganj, you follow a coastal trail before ascending a rocky path for approximately 20 minutes. You're quickly rewarded with stunning views across the channel to Korčula before descending into Orebić. Once an important maritime center, this charming town is now home to a small maritime museum.

Enjoy lunch and a stroll through town on your own. Afterward, continue to magnificent Dubrovnik, with a brief stop in Ston—renowned for its ancient salt pans (the oldest in Europe) and its impressive 14th-century walls. Originally stretching for five miles and fortified with 40 towers and five forts, these historic defenses are among the longest preserved fortification systems in the world.

From Ston, continue by minibus for another hour to your luxury seaside hotel, where you arrive by late afternoon. After time to refresh—and perhaps enjoy a swim at the private beach or pool—reconvene for a celebratory dinner with your leaders and fellow travelers as you toast the week's adventures.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 7

Your Country Walkers Vacation Ends. Post-Tour Hotel Night: Dubrovnik

After an included breakfast, you bid farewell to your leaders and travel companions and enjoy a relaxing day at your leisure.

Lunch and dinner are on your own—perhaps at one of the hotel's fine restaurants or in Dubrovnik's charming Old Town. We provide detailed city information to help you plan your day and evening.

Included Meals: Breakfast

Departure Day

Departure

Zbogom! (Goodbye!)

After an included breakfast this morning, complimentary transportation will be provided to Čilipi International Airport in Dubrovnik based on your departure time.

Included Meals: Breakfast

What's Included

Tour Only

Air Package

Exceptional boutique accommodations	✓	✓
14 on-tour meals: 6 breakfasts, 4 lunches, 4 dinners	✓	✓
Local leaders with you throughout land tour	✓	✓
Local wine and/or beer with dinner	✓	✓
Entrance fees and special events as noted in the itinerary	✓	✓
Telescopic walking sticks provided on tour	✓	✓
Roundtrip airfare		✓
One extra night in Split and one extra night in Dubrovnik		✓
Airport car service for arrival & departure		✓
Business-class upgrades available		✓